

SKATEBOARD TENSION STRAP

Cross-Reference to Related Application

This application claims the benefit of and priority from United States provisional application Serial No. 60/431,278 filed on December 5, 2002.

Background and Summary of Invention

The skateboard tension strap according to the present invention has its birth from the invention of the skateboard, itself, and will revolutionize the art of professional "extreme"-style skateboarding. Specifically, my invention relates to a particular set of devices, the skateboard strap design, itself, and the "tension" device, proportionate with the concept of professional freestyle skateboarding.

Aside from having to bend at the knees in doing "limited" (not more than two) 360 degree revolutions holding the skateboard, the "professional" extreme style skateboarder has not advanced to a "continuous" flow of gymnastic type, "high" degree of difficulty acrobatic stunts, during his "showmanship" of professional freestyle skateboarding. The professional industry of skateboarding has not seen even the best of seasoned riders do five or six 360 degree revolutions (as in professional iceskating) or "aerial," "death defying" stunts on his board with near perfect skill.

Moreover, the art of professional extreme skateboarding is a play of colorful showmanship. The particular design of my invention allows the professional to give more attention to the "mechanical" technique of difficult stunts, using virtually no energy to constantly "hold" the skateboard. My invention lets the professional do low-crouching (bending at the knees) or standing (fully erect) 360 degree revolutions with the aid of the specific "tension" portion of the skateboard strap. The showmanship of this invention comes into play when the rider can do other things with his hands, like salute the crowd, or hold both arms outstretched like a helicopter while in flight; and even still, with his hands akimbo (both hands on hips) in a gesture of pure perfection and confidence. All of this is enabled by the

1 "tension" portion of my invention, allowing the professional raider freedom from holding the
2 skateboard, thus alleviating any difficulty of constantly "maintaining" (holding) the skateboard,
3 which can limit a continuous flow and succession of stunts.

4 Prior Art References

5 The prior art includes U.S. patent 4,732,400 to Santini for a "Scooter Board;" U.S.
6 patent 4,811,971 to Phillips for a "Ride-on Vehicle;" U.S. patent 4,179,134 to Atkinson for a
7 "Removable Trainer Handle and Brake for Skateboard;" U.S. patent 4,289,325 to Whitacre
8 for a "Skateboard" with an extra long front to attach a rope and handle; U.S. patent 4,887,825
9 to Allen et al for a "Skateboard" with a flexible cord passing through a hole in the center, and
10 U.S. patent 5,221,111 to Younger. Other examples of prior art include U.S. patents 6,089,592
11 and 5,020,827.

12 Currently, all former Skateboard Accessories to Assist in Airborne Maneuvers have
13 failed to entertain specifically the professional skateboard rider due to inefficient functionality
14 of such an accessory. In one way or the other, in the aforementioned prior art references, the
15 inventions lacked "specific" design, or a specific device to allow "unlimited" and "unhampered"
16 use. For example, some particular part of such an invention either obstructed a smooth ride
17 or could not be used without maintaining constant pressure by the rider's arm, and expending
18 a great deal of arm, muscle-energy in maintaining a solid connection between the rider and
19 board.

20 My invention seeks to not only free-up the professional skateboarder's hands, and save
21 energy from holding any loose fitting, insufficient accessory where showmanship is important,
22 but also seeks to make my product a "fashion statement" in today's advertisement and
23 marketing industry. By making my invention "functional" to the professional, as well as
24 fashionable to the "urban culture" of extreme skateboarding, it can revolutionize the industry
25 drastically. My invention is a "specific" concept of working mechanics, to enhance
26 professional articulation to the "art" of skateboarding, with the endless possibilities of

1 showmanship and urban fashion style.

2 Specifically, the concept is drawn from the present skateboard invention and allows,
3 namely, the competitive, professional skateboarder to do a "higher" degree of aerial, as well
4 as "acrobatic" stunts with more precision and picturesque end results. The skateboard
5 "tension" strap portion, and the skateboard "strap" design itself, will increase threefold the
6 "optimal" criteria for the professionals' freestyle program in its entirety. The particular
7 hardware (materials) to make the product are lightweight but dependable. The specifications
8 of the skateboard "strap" design make it more than "accessory" to the professional, but also
9 makes the invention an "urban culture" fashion market medium.

10 A primary object of the invention is a skateboard tension strap which resiliently
11 connects the skateboard to a waist belt worn by the user, thereby allowing the user to perform
12 "hands-free" stunts.

13 A further object is to provide a skateboard tension strap having a design that allows a
14 variety of logos, names or fashion displays or figures to be applied thereto.

15 Other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following
16 detailed description and drawings wherein:

17 Brief Description of the Drawings

18 Fig. 1 is a front elevational view of a skateboard tension strap according to the present
19 invention;

20 Fig. 2 is a perspective view of a waist belt worn by a user when the skateboard tension
21 strap is in use;

22 Fig. 3 is a schematic representation of a belt hook used to adjustably connect the
23 skateboard tension strap of Fig. 1 to the waist belt of Fig. 2;

24 Fig. 4 is a sectional view of a female connector or anchor used to connect the
25 skateboard tension strap to the top of a skateboard;

1 Fig. 5 is a sectional view of the anchor of Fig. 4 and the lower end of the tension strap
2 connected thereto; and

3 Fig. 6 is a perspective view showing a user temporarily and adjustably connected to
4 a skateboard by the present invention.

5 Detailed Description of the Drawings

6 Fig. 1 illustrates a skateboard tension strap shown generally as 50. The strap 50
7 includes a central portion 1 that is relatively wide and flat, thereby lending itself to the
8 application of a commercial logo, name or a fanciful design or "fashion" statement. Strap 50
9 has a first end 5 adapted to be anchored to the skateboard (see Fig. 6) and a second end 8
10 for adjustably connecting the strap 1 to waist belt 7 (Fig. 2). My invention also includes
11 connecting means shown generally as 60 in Fig. 3 for adjustably connecting the second or
12 upper end 8 of tension strap means 50 to waist belt 7, thereby allowing the skateboard user
13 to perform hands-free stunts without having to use his or her hands to hold or control the
14 skateboard. The tension strap means 50 includes an elastic section 2 which allows the user
15 to adjust the amount of tension in strap means 50. To increase the tension in strap means 50,
16 the user simply pulls upwardly on the free end (or second end) 8 of strap 50. As described
17 below, the second or upper end 8 is threaded through a multi-level buckle 60 including a
18 plurality of slidable loops. The slidable loops are designed to allow the user to pull upwardly
19 on end 8 to increase tension and, when the user releases the upper end 8, the slidable loops
20 hold the strap means 50 in that particular position. In order to release the tension, the user
21 must pull in the opposite direction to release the upper end 8 from the slidable loops of
22 connecting means 60. It is to be understood that alternate connecting means may be utilized
23 to adjustably connect the upper end (or second end) 8 of strap means 50 to waist belt 7. It
24 is also to be understood that alternate anchors may be utilized for removably attaching the
25 first end 5 of the tension strap means 50 to the skateboard.

1 The "tension" strap adjustment portion 8 of my invention (Fig. 1) will be designed of a
2 durable nylon belt and can be connected to the strap 1 by either sewing or by rivets set in
3 optimal positions. The "belt hook" portion 13 (Fig. 3) of the skateboard strap will connect to
4 the waist belt hook connection 14, carried by the waist belt 7 (Fig. 2). The upper or second
5 end 8 of nylon tension strap 50 will be threaded into the sliding loops of connecting means 60
6 by being fed behind loop 9, in and over loop 10, then under and up through loop 11 as a
7 means to tighten and release tension.

8 The operation of the "tension release lip" 12 is vital to the complete workability of the
9 skateboard tension strap concept. Besides being an important connection between the rider's
10 waist belt and the board, the "tension release lip" (the shaded portion 12) works to release
11 tension before disengaging the skateboard strap for non-use. The shaded portion is simply
12 pushed out with the thumb, while simultaneously holding the tension strap portion so as to
13 release the right amount of drag. The tension release lip 12 acts as a manual "adjustment"
14 device, whereas the tension strap portion 8 is used by pulling the tension strap upward, the
15 reason for the unique threading of loops 9, 10 and 11 to increase tension for use.

16 The skateboard strap 1 is directly connected to the elastic portion 2 by sewing or rivets
17 whichever method is optimal. The elastic portion 2 and the tension strap portion 8, along with
18 the male/female connection 5,6 fully engaged, will increase tension between the rider and the
19 skateboard without constant manual operation by the rider. After the rider applies the right
20 amount of tension to his skateboard strap, he is free to let the tension part of the strap go,
21 without it dangling, where then he can concentrate on his particular stunts.

22 The male connector portion 3 of the skateboard strap is equipped with two release
23 buttons 4 working in unison with each other to disengage the strap from the skateboard when
24 not in use. The anchoring pins 5a and 5b should be of a design that does not require the
25 release buttons 4 to be engaged for use. Rather, the locking and release pins should lock into
26 place simply by directing the male connector 3 into the female connector 6 (Fig. 4). Moreover,

1 the female connector 6 will be designed with an "oval" shaped topside so that the rider's feet
2 will glide smoothly over the female connector 6, thereby not hampering the normal course of
3 riding and stunts. The female connector device will be of optimal design when the locking and
4 release pins make a solid connection, implying a thin design, and again, a smooth rounded
5 top surface, so as not to protrude while riding.

6 In emphasizing the fashionable aspects of my product, it must be noted that if a product
7 works and is marketable, then it has a great chance of selling. My invention also takes into
8 consideration the climate of urban fashion, as a means of promoting a successful product.
9 As has been seen by companies like "Nike" and others, a properly designed and reliable
10 product beats out its competitors. The specifications of the skateboarding strap and
11 cummerbund design of the waist belt will be made to accompany a trademark name and logo
12 of some type in bold print to again make the product fashionable in conjunction with
13 workability. The lettering for the designer name and the artwork for personalized
14 skateboarding straps will be original, colorful and creative. While standard skateboarding
15 straps will be of a less expensive material, such as durable canvas, standard straps will still
16 be made with modest fashion statements in mind. Again, for the professional skateboarder,
17 the style of his skateboarding strap will only be a matter of creativity and imagination.

18 The assembly for the skateboarding tension strap for the flat plate fixture is as follows.
19 The underside of the skateboard is hollowed out (filled) with a correct drill bit (not included in
20 the product packaging) and a simple measuring device (included in the product). First, the
21 center of the skateboard is found by using a balancing chip (listed as x and included in the
22 product), placed in the approximate center of the board and adjusted until the perfect center
23 is found. The balancing chip is at that point used as the outline where the assembly person
24 takes a pencil to outline around the balancing chip piece. Done correctly, using the
25 measuring device and proper household tools, and with photo diagrams in the instructions,
26 there will be no need for professional service. This is a workable approach to easy assembly

1 and the infinite details can be worked out during the production stage.

2 Nevertheless, after the hollowing out process is complete, filled out fractions of an inch,
3 the flat plate 25 is then inserted to ensure a snug fit where there is no obstruction to normal
4 riding. This implies that the filling out process must be done with a fair degree of care. The
5 use of two flathead screws would be optimal and are to be inserted from the bottom of the flat
6 plate assembly. The board is then turned over, topside up, and the female connector and its
7 fastening nuts are secured into place. To re-emphasize the unique design of the female
8 connector, the top of the female connector should be rounded, preferably of an "oval" design.
9 Again, it should be of a design strong enough to support the applicable tension applied
10 between the rider and his board, yet the smooth "rounded" surface of the female connector
11 must not interfere with the normal course of riding. The design of the female connector will
12 ensure that the fastening nuts are embedded into each screw slot as a means to prevent
13 obstruction. The assembly of the skateboarding strap is then complete and ready for use.

14 Although the skateboarding tension strap can be used by the recreational
15 skateboarder, the total concept around the unique design is especially made for the
16 professional freestyle competitor. The special skateboarding "tension" strap design, the
17 designed strap and its fashionable flare, the mechanics that make the product functional to
18 the professional, are unmatched. After assembly, the skateboarding tension strap is easy to
19 use, simply by engaging the male/female connection, and finally by increasing tension (by
20 means of the strap) between the rider and his board. The rider does not need to constantly
21 maintain attention to the skateboarding tension strap, even while engaged and not in use.
22 Tripping over the skateboarding strap can be avoided simply by applying the right amount of
23 loose tension for riding. However, when the professional gets to a point in his freestyle
24 program where the technique and perfect performance of his "multiple" 360 degree, and
25 unlimited "aerial acrobatic" stunts are tantamount, he only has to pull the upper portion 8 of
26 the tension strap means 50 and concentrate on a flawless display of picturesque skate-

1 boarding skill. Moreover, the fashionable quality and projection of the product make it prime
2 for the "urban" cultural society. I see this product, along with the end result it produces, as
3 a complete success in the art of professional skateboarding.

4 The foregoing description of the invention has been presented for purposes of
5 illustration and description and is not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the invention to the
6 precise form disclosed. Modifications and variations are possible in light of the above
7 teaching. These particular embodiments were chosen and described to best explain the
8 principles of the invention and its practical application to thereby enable others skilled in the
9 art to best use the invention in various embodiments and with various modifications suited to
10 the particular use contemplated. The scope of the invention is to be defined by the following
11 claims.

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